

Date: _____

The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate/U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510/20515

Dear Senator/Representative _____:

As a patient of physical therapy services, I am writing to ask you to take action to pass legislation this month to stop arbitrary Medicare financial limits or “therapy caps” from harming beneficiaries who need outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech language pathologist services. The therapy caps for 2011 are currently set at \$1,870 for physical therapy and speech language pathologist services (combined cap) and \$1,870 for occupational therapist services per beneficiary per year.

Without Congressional action before December 31, 2011 beneficiaries needing care above the therapy cap will be forced to travel to an outpatient hospital facility for care, forgo care or face paying 100 percent of the cost of additional treatment out pocket when coverage expires.

Over the past decade, Congress has recognized the potential harm in this policy and has passed several moratoriums on its enforcement. Starting in 2006, Congress allowed the therapy cap to go into effect and then passed legislation allowing for exceptions for beneficiaries needing care above the financial limit. In June of 2008, Congress extended this exceptions process through December 31, 2009. On December 9, 2010, Congress acted again to extend the exceptions process through December 31, 2011.

As you may know, there are inherent problems with the therapy cap:

- The arbitrary therapy caps have a disproportionate impact on those Medicare beneficiaries who need therapy care the most. Beneficiaries who suffer from a stroke, or have Parkinson's disease, amputations, spinal cord injuries, or osteoporosis are most likely to be the type of patient needing such care.
- While I can currently apply for an exception to the therapy cap, it is a short-term solution which leaves me wondering if my rehabilitation services under Medicare will be covered on January 1, 2012.

If Congress does nothing, a hard therapy cap will be reinstated on all Medicare beneficiaries on December 31, 2011. While the best long term solution is to pass the The Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act of 2011 (H.R. 1546/S. 829), which would repeal the arbitrary therapy caps once and for all, Congress must at least extend the current exceptions process to ensure access to care in the short term.

Please take action to pass legislation this month to extend the therapy cap exceptions process. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Address
